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ABSTRACT

In the late 1920s, in conjunction with a new passion for freedom and concern for human rights, two associations were formed in Japan to promote parents' education and children's welfare. In 1928, following a 2-year study of education in America, Tetsuya Kamimura started the Japan Parents' Re-education Association. The association's members included teachers, principals, physicians, scientists, and artists. The association published a 10-volume "Child Study Course" and a monthly magazine, "Itoshigo"; held meetings for mothers; and set up branches throughout Japan. The second association, Kodomo no Kyoyo, was established in 1929 by Yoshiki Takasaki and Takashi Takenami based on their belief in the importance of the education of children and parents. Kodomo no Kyoyo emphasized scientific approaches to child education, and psychologists, doctors, and scientists contributed articles to the association's journal. The religious background of the association's Christian staff influenced the association's position on child rearing and education. Kodomo no Kyoyo provided parents with a variety of learning opportunities, including short training courses, lecture and discussion meetings, and mothers' schools. Though both movements were active throughout Japan, they attracted primarily middle-class parents who were enthusiastic about their children's education. Both continued to publish until World War II. Japan's current social problems may speak to the need to promote parents' re-education once again. (AC)

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BEGINNING OF MOVEMENT FOR RE-EDUCATION OF PARENTS IN JAPAN IN THE 1920'S

In Japan, loyalty to the state and obedience to one's parents have long been the core of human virtues under the feudal system. Therefore even in family education, the vertical relationship (such as between lord and followers, master and servant, and parents and children) was the most important element.

In the Meiji era (200 years ago), for the first time in its history, Japan introduced Western ideas on education, which puts emphasis on human rights. But as a national principle, enrichment and strengthening of the country was still the supreme priority. And so children were educated in line with this national policy.

It was far later, in 1920, that new civic movements started on their own spontaneous initiative to promote both parents and children's welfare and education. In 1924, after the devastation of W.W.I, the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child was issued. In the following decade, a new passion for freedom called "Taisho Democracy" swept all over Japan. People became more conscious of human rights, women's status, children's welfare and education, and various new methods and movements were introduced.

The great Kanto earthquake prompted the government to take more positive measures on child protection and pre-school education.

Here I'd like to introduce two of these civic movements on parents re-education. One was "Japan Parents Re-education Association" started in 1928 by Tetsuya Kamimura, later a professor at Japan Women's College. He made a two year observation tour of education in America in 1925, and was deeply impressed by the parents' re-education movements then widely developed in America and Europe. In America he energetically made a research on child care centers and parents' re-education movements.

As a background of this movement there was the worldwide recession, which caused many social problems such as unemployment, bankruptcy and child abuse. Also parents were expected to play a big role as a new educator, but they failed to meet this social need because of the lack of knowledge and poor learning background. In the light of this situation this movement tried to give people guidance for good parenthood by more scientific approaches, introducing medicine, psychology, physiology and pedagogy.

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After returning to Japan, in 1928 Kamimura organised the "Japan Parents Re-education Association".

The founding staff members of the association were as follows.

*Chairman	Matataro Matsumoto(Dr.of literature and psychologist)
*Adviser	Inazo Nitobe(Dr.of Agriculture)
	Shigenao Konishi(Dr.of literature)
*Editorial adviser	
	Seishiro Aoki(assistant professor at Tokyo university)
	Kuniyoshi Ohara(President of Seijo Gakuen)
	Kameo Chiba(director of Tokyo Nichinichi Newspaper)
	Kunpei Takeuchi(Dr.of Medicine)
	Yu Yano(Dr.of Medicine)
	Haruo Sato(author)
*Supporting members	
	Sozo Kurahashi(Kindergarten Principal)
	Kanichi Tanaka(psychologist)
	Hakutei Ishii(artist)
	Shigeru Kuzuhara(poet)
	and many otheres
*Chief editor	
	Tetsuya Kamimura(Bachelor of Law)
*Editor and publisher	
	Katsuya Kamimura
*Publisher	Senshin-sha

Chairman Matsumoto was a pioneer sholar of psychology in Japan. Nitobe was a world famous scholar and Kamimura's college day mentor. Konishi was a professor of Pedagogy at kyoto University.

Supporting members consisted of psychologists, pedagogists, school teachers, Kindergarten pricipals, school principals, literary people, writers, poets, doctors, pediatricians, scientists and artists who were all well known and influential in society at that time.

With those people as writers, ten volumes of Child Study Course was published from September 1928 through July 1929 every month by a publishing firm 'Senshin-sha' owned by Katsuya Kamimura, yonger brother of Tetsuya Kamimura.

As the content of this course covered a variety of interesting items on parents education and systematically arranged academic subjects of high quality, it became very popular among parents and school teachers and rapidly developed into a nationwide network.

Soon after, in August 1929 Tetsuya Kamimura started a monthly magazine 'Itoshigo' (see, picture) sponsored by the Parents Re-education Association This magazine was discontinued during the war but later continued until 1966.
Most of the readers of this magazine were mothers. Meetings for mothers were held and branches were set up throughout Japan to promote parents re-education This magazine played a pivotal role as an organ for this movement.

The other one was a publishing association "Kodomo no Kyoyo" started in 1929 by Yoshiki Takasaki, assisted by editor Takashi Takenami.

Takasaki, a pastor and kindergarten principal, was, in his childhood, a naughty boy, and his name was in the teacher's blacklist for his bad conduct. From this experience he came to think that parents characters and behaviour in the home, were the most influential in forming children's characters and personalities. Then he advanced the importance of parents education and mother's education in particular.

He believed that parents were the real educators with a special mission given by God and appealed for the importance of parents education, to the public with the motto "keep your home holy and bring up your children to be pure" and promoted the parents re-education movement all over Japan.

This association came into being when Yoshiki Takasaki encountered Takashi Takenami, an editor of Nihon Keizai Shinbun(a newspaper relating to the economy) They sicerely discussed the importance of child education and parents education and cooperated to set up this association.

In January 1929 the first issue of the monthly magazine "Kodomo no Kyoyo" was published by Takenami as an editor and lasted until 1941 when the war broke out.

The supporting members of this association Were as follows.

*Chief editor
Yoshiki Takasaki(pastor of Asagaya church and Kindergarten principal)
*Editor and publisher
Takashi Takenami
*Adviser
Doichi Okada(Pediatrician)
*Supporting members
Mizuhiko Sato(director of Jiyu-Gakuen elementary school)
Yonekichi Akai(president of Meisei-Gakuen)

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Kenji Uezawa(writer of juvenile literature and Kindergarten pricipal)
Shizushi Shimoda(child psychologist)
Iwasaburo Okino(pastor, author)
Kokichi Takamura(school teacher)
Seiro Okamoto(children's dentist)
Kyo Hirose(Dr.of Medicine)
Teiji Hirasawa(artist)
and many others.

The lineup of the staff members ranged from teachers and Kindergarten principals who were actually working with children,to pastors,writers,scholars,pediatricians and artists. There were a lot of people there who belonged to the school of New Education based on the freedom of Taisho Democracy. In line with this new trend "Kodomo no Kyoyo" put emphasis on scientific approaches to child education and many psychologists,doctors and scientists contributed to the magazine from this perspective.

Another interesting aspect of this association is that there were many chiristians in its staff.From Yosiki Takasaki and Iwasaburo Okino who were pastors to Sato,Akai,Takamura Uezawa,they were all christians. Their background as a christian made it clear how to live and how to raise children. The readers who sympathized with their ideas and christian schools and Kindergartens supported this magazine and the distinctive featrure of this magazine was long rememberd.

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For this purpose he introduced "Human Education" written by Frobel, the founder of Kindergartens, in easy words so that mothers could understand. And he also opened short training courses and lecture meetings. In 1936, he started a mothers' school to give mothers opportunities to study child education with more scientific methods.

This association provided parents with opportunities to learn as follows.

1 short training courses
2 lecture meetings(nationwide)
3 discussion meetings
4 study meeting with teachers
5 research of children's books
6 publishing of books for parents (See picture)
7 opening of mother's schools
and so on

These two civic movements spread all over Japan, but most of the people who joined these meetings were middle class parents enthusiastic about their children's education.

In due course, Japan got involved in W.W.II and these two magazines stopped publication. The movements were hampered by zealous nationalism, and financial difficulties brought them to an end.

After the war Japan's education system was reformed, based on democracy, and family education also changed for more individually-oriented education.

Today Japan has become rich, but a lot of problems lie under the prosperous society's surface. A big problem is the deterioration

of family education. Previously Japanese homes were the place in which traditional values were handed down through generations. Grandparents usually lived together with parents and children. And they were the best teachers of child care. But now most families are so-called nuclear families and young mothers feel uneasy at bringing up children. Having only one or two children, parents become overprotective and overinterfering. As quite a few mothers are working outside the home, their children are left neglected. Besides, in Japan competition for famous schools is very severe, so a lot of parents send their children to cram schools from very early years, and this has become another serious problem.

1995 is supposed to be the international year of family. Shouldn't we consider the need to promote parents re-education movements again? This is not a problem of mothers or parents only, but the whole of society should assist them to tackle this issue. We must recognise that the role of Kindergarten and Nursery School is very important for the re-education of parents. Of course we also need to think about the education of those who will become the parents of the next generation.

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Publishing of books for Parents

a monthly magazine "Itoshigo"

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